

Clarity by MistressYin

Series: [Just A Word \[3\]](#)

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: F/M

Language: English

Characters: Eleven | Jane Hopper, Jim "Chief" Hopper, Jonathon Byers, Joyce Byers, Lucas Sinclair, Maxine "Max" Mayfield, Mike Wheeler, Mrs. Harrington (mentioned), Nancy Wheeler, Steve Harrington, Will Byers

Relationships: Jonathan Byers/Nancy Wheeler

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Summary:

Steve is allowed to see his mother again, and tries to pick up the pieces to his life he dropped a long time ago.

Clarity

Author's Note:

Hello! Prompt number three! This story will most likely not make sense if you do not read at least the first of this series!

And the word of the day is...Clarity!

Steve studied the icy water in front of him, annoyed with his predicament. He couldn't find the perfect word to describe the water. He normally always had a great word, vocabulary was not something he lacked. If anything, it was probably the only thing he was consecutively good at in school.

He tilted his head this way and that, trying and failing to find just the right way to explain how the liquid looked as if morphed and swayed with the wind.

"Hey Steve!" Lucas taunted, startling him enough to straighten his back from its previous slump in panic, for a brief moment imagining his father shouting at him instead of the Sinclair kid.

A snow ball hit him right in the back of the head, knocking his hat off and into the hard ice chunky water before him, creating imperfections in his reflection. The ice was cracked where he was sitting, and he had been picking at it for quite some time now, uselessly trying to create the perfect hole in the sleet ice while the dweebs ran around

"Oh shi- Sorry dude!" he called over, embarrassed.

He sighed taking off his gloves and reaching into the water. Steve kept his hands under the freezing water longer than necessary, moving the hat around under the water.

Pristine and clear, the water rippled under his ungloved hands. He went back to pondering on the best way to describe the water.

He submerged his hands further, watching them turn bright red

before pulling them out and back into the brisk air around them. He dropped his hat carelessly on the snow beside him.

Immaculate as the water was, its effect on his hands was anything but clean. His hands were red and blotchy and definitely felt unbearably hot even though they had been ice before.

“Is your hat okay?” Mike jogged over, tilting his head curiously as he examined the article of clothing.

Steve grabbed the hat and stood up, shoving the kid in the side. “Yup! Just wet and will probably get me sick if I wear it.”

“What about me?!”

He winced. Mike patted him on his arm. “You’ve got to get used to not using the word ‘will’ it’s confusing to everyone.”

Steve slumped his torso dramatically.

His mind drifted back to the water, clear and easy to see through like nothing in his life. Today he was going to go visit his mother, whom had slipped out of jail but lost custody of him, and rightfully so.

He had failed to communicate this with anyone but Jane and Jim, the girl of those two looking at him in concern from across the snow.

Steve turned away hastily, only to be smashed in the face with another snowball.

“Ok...” he wiped the snow off of his face with his glove, “Now it’s on.”

Cold water splashed at each other and enough snow shoved down their backs to run a refrigerator, Steve found himself sitting in Ms. Byers home with a cover wrapped around him, festive socks on, and a mug of hot cocoa in his hands.

Mike may or may not have ‘lost’ his cover so he could share with Jane. He blew on his drink, causing the liquid to slosh around the cup. He took an experimental drink, suppressing the goofy grin when it instantly warmed his insides.

He let himself get lost in thought as the groups chatter swept over him. He thought back to finding the perfect adjective to describe the icy water, but still none came to mind.

Cool, balanced, glassy, swirly, still, tranquil...

Nope. None of them described it the way he wanted.

“Will dear, did you want peppermint in yours?”

“Yea, thanks mom!”

The interaction sent something negative settling in his stomach. His mother wouldn't have even made hot chocolate for him, let alone add special flavoring to abide to his tastes.

Jealously swept over him like the wind, while his heartbeat quickened in agitation.

Then he shook himself off. Jealous? Of Will Byers, zombie boy? A laughable indictment.

Jane eyed Will's peppermint.

“Wan'na try?”

She nodded silently.

“Good?”

Licking her lips, Jane smiled briefly and nodded before passing the cup back over to him.

Icy, cold, bitter, wavy, frozen, calm, clear...

“Does anyone else want flavoring? I have more than just peppermint you know...”

Peaceful? Equanimity? Poise?

“What about you Steve?”

Idyllic? Graceful? Lucid?

“Steve?”

Melancholy? Ostensible? Beau-

“YO STEVE!”

He startled, his drink sloshing angrily as he took in the exasperated faces before him.

“Do you want some flavor, man?”

“Oh—! Uh, no, no thank you. T-thanks for asking though.” He stumbled, recollecting himself and focusing back onto the conversation.

“Are you okay?” Dustin questioned, tilting his head suspiciously.

Jane answered for him. “He is worried about meeting with his mama.” She threw out causally, taking a large gulp of her drink. She then settled the cup on her lap, wiping her lip with the back of her hand. “He told me so.”

“Your meeting Mrs. er, Ms. Harrington today, sweetie? Oh well why didn’t you say so! Do you want to talk about it? Because I’m here if you need to.” Mrs. Byers rambled, pulling up a seat and brushing her messy hair out of her face.

“No thank you, mam. I’ve got Jane and Hopper for that, listening’s all they seem to do.” He jabbed at their quiet personalities, grinning when Mike cried indignantly.

“Concision is key!”

He rolled his eyes and hid behind his mug. “Yea, yea, kid.”

It was not the first time he had uttered the phrase, this becoming clear by noticing that Jane didn’t even look mildly confused at the large word he used.

Maxine pulled her knees to her chest. “Well, this must be nerve wracking for you.” She mumbled under her breath. “I mean, how awkward.”

Lucas squirmed next to her, glancing at Mike and Jane's cuddling jealously. "Yea, this situation sucks." He agreed glumly.

The mood dampened slightly. Will averted his eyes and fiddled with the sleeve of his jacket. "What are you going to say to her?"

Murmurs of agreement and similar questions broke out.

"I'm going to walk up to her and start with, 'Hi! It's your son that you've lived with for nearly 18 years! This really should not be any more awkward than all the other short interactions we've had over the course of our lives! So can we just act and behave like adults during this conversation' and then get the hell out of there."

He heard a snort from the door. "Good game plan, Steve."

Jonathon had his lips quirked up with way too much amusement gleaming in his eyes.

Nancy slid up next to him, having finished hanging their coats. She socked her boyfriend in the arm with a sharp look. Jonathon seethed and crossed his arm.

Ha.

"Do you even want to talk to her? She doesn't seem like the kind of person I would want to talk to." She said bluntly, crossing her arms in a mirror of Jonathon's pose, making them both look like petulant five year olds who were told they couldn't have any more cookies.

Except much more intimidating.

"Yes, even if I don't keep a relationship with her, I'll regret not trying for the rest of my life. I need—I need—"

What was the damn word?

"He needs clarity." Dustin slurred over his large mouthful of cookies.

Clarity. That was exactly what he needed. He needed everything to be clear.

He suddenly had the perfect word to describe the ice water.

Clarity. Clear and blatant, easy to read, easy to see through, and yet elegant all at the same time.

He snapped his fingers and then pointed to Dustin. “That! I need that! Clarity,”

He needed something in his life to be as easy to see clearly as the crystal water outside.

Author's Note:

Thank you for reading, I hope you enjoyed!

Thanks again from MistressYin!